

MINUTES
TALBOT COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
5 October 2009

I. ROLL CALL

The regular monthly meeting of the Talbot County Historic Preservation Commission was called to order at 9:40 AM on Monday, 5 October 2009. Those members in attendance were Ms. Peggy Pickall - Chairperson, Mrs. Christine Dayton, Mr. Robert Arnouts, Mr. Steven K. Hack and Mr. Eric Lowery. Ms. Kathleen Kurtz was not present. *The County Council has not yet notified TCHPC about a new commissioner to replace Mrs. Polly Shannahan.* Representing the County were Mr. Martin Sokolich, and Ms. Florence Ball.

II. CURRENT BUSINESS

A. REVIEW OF 14 SEPTEMBER MINUTES - The minutes of the meeting on 14 September 2009 were read. Since there were no corrections or additions: *Mrs. Christine Dayton moved to approve the minutes as read. The motion was seconded by Mr. Eric Lowery and unanimously carried.*

B. UPDATES:

1. DEMOLITION DELAY ORDINANCE – Mr. Robert Arnouts said to date, there has been no word from the County Attorney's office regarding the status of the ordinance. He said he sent an email to Dirck Bartlett after last month's meeting, to find out if he will sponsor the ordinance. Mr. Bartlett said he had a problem with the portion of the ordinance stating that buildings of a vintage of 50 years or more would be subject to the delay imposed by the proposed Demolition Delay ordinance. He felt that buildings should only be subject to the ordinance if they were built prior to 1900, and that they should be on MHT's inventory list. Mr. Arnouts told Mr. Bartlett TCHPC would be willing to make any adjustments necessary to satisfy the County Council's requirements. He has not received any further comments from Mr. Bartlett.

In rebuttal of Mr. Bartlett's conception of what age a building should be to be considered historic, Ms. Peggy Pickall said the standard of 50 years of age is commonly used to consider a structure as historic fabric, and is cited as a standard rule of thumb for historic structures in the tax credit documentation information Ms. Florence Ball had forwarded to her. She will email that information to Mike Pullen.

2. 925 PORT STREET (T-347) – Mr. Martin Sokolich provided everyone with a copy of an outline for a MOU between TCHPC and the Department of Parks and Recreation for an historic district overlay at 925 Port Street. It was discussed that Rick Towle is under the impression that once an HDO is placed on the property, he will be required to start spending money immediately to make the repairs recommended in Ward Bucher's report.

Mr. Sokolich said he will talk to Rick Towle to clarify that it would not be a requirement of the HDO. He asked if he should forward a copy of the outline to Mike Pullen.

Ms. Peggy Pickall wondered if TCHPC can write an easement to protect the historic elements of the interior of the house, such as trim, fireplace features, doors, locks, etc. It was discussed how much should be included in such an easement and that perhaps a field trip by TCHPC would be a good idea. Mrs. Christine Dayton said an easement on the interior might be useful to exempt certain current building codes from being required such as changing the stair configuration. The resulting flexibility could result in renovation savings. Mr. Steven Hack advised Ms. Peggy Pickall where to access building codes applicable to historic buildings, citing the *Existing Structures* section of the *International Building Code*.

3. TCHPC GUIDELINES, MISSIONS AND DUTIES – Ms. Peggy Pickall said she feels a consultant will be necessary to write a set of guidelines for TCHPC since none of the Commissioners have time to work on them. As discussed last month, some of the Commissioners feel it is not necessary for TCHPC to have a separate set of guidelines from those of the Secretary of the Interior. Ms. Pickall said she is concerned about MAHDC's recommendation to develop separate guidelines. Mrs. Christine Dayton said she agrees with Mr. Robert Arnout's argument from last month's meeting, that: "if the State wants TCHPC to have separate guidelines, let them provide us with a set." Mr. Robert Arnouts suggested requesting funds for a consultant in the next budget year. Ms. Peggy Pickall reminded him that TCHPC had done so last time, and was turned down. Mrs. Christine Dayton observed that the County Council is eager for development of historic interests, but does not want to spend money to support them, and that they need to rethink their priorities. She felt, with the small number of historic overlay properties TCHPC has, and the even smaller number of projects that come up for review, guidelines besides those of the Secretary of the Interior should not be necessary. Mr. Steven Hack agreed that the standards of the Secretary of the Interior are adequate in consideration of the relatively scant number of HDOs.

The subject of overlays for village centers was discussed. Mr. Martin Sokolich said most of the village centers are "trepidacious" about imposing overlays on their villages because they fear the overlays will be too restrictive. He said the representatives from the villages of Fairbank and Tilghman have expressed interest in protecting their villages with overlays. Mr. Robert Arnouts wondered if something could be put in the zoning ordinance that would make it possible for a village center to go through an overlay process. He felt it would be beneficial for TCHPC to take a proactive approach and develop an outline of the Commission's suggested application and review process to be presented as a possible addition or amendment to the County zoning ordinance. Ms. Peggy Pickall asked the Commissioners whether the focus of TCHPC should shift from HDOs to villages. Mrs. Christine Dayton replied that TCHPC should shift its focus from writing guidelines to villages. Ms. Peggy Pickall said she will call MHT to see what kinds of help might be available from them regarding overlays for villages.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. ELECTION OF OFFICERS – Ms. Peggy Pickall polled the Commissioners for nominations. Since there were only four other Commissioners present and no one offered nominations, it was decided that the election be tabled once again until next month's meeting, in hopes that everyone would be present, and hopefully there would be a new Commissioner assigned to fill Polly Shannahan's seat. Ms. Florence Ball said she recently talked to Stacey Dahlstrom, who had expressed interest in being a Commissioner, and was told that she is still quite interested and hoping she might be appointed. Ms. Peggy Pickall said she will write a letter to Andy Hollis and express the urgency to have the position filled, and will also let him know TCHPC would like to have Mrs. Dahlstrom as a new member of the Commission.
- B. GRANT SEMINARS - In discussing the difficulties in acquiring grants, Ms. Peggy Pickall suggested it would be a good idea to form a committee of two people to work on grant acquisition and writing. She presented some information about grant seminars for anyone interested in attending, adding that they would count toward the continuing education requirement for TCHPC Commissioners.
- C. OCTOBER SITE VISIT DESTINATION AND REPORT FROM SEPTEMBER VISIT TO WYE HOUSE (T-54) – The recent visit to Wye House revealed only minor problems such as a few crooked shingles. Overall, the property was found to be well maintained and in good shape.

Mr. Steven Hack has scheduled a site visit at Rich Neck Manor (T-211). In addition, he said he has scheduled a site visit at Mt. Misery (T-207) for the month of November.

IV. OPEN FLOOR

- A. AWARD PRESENTATION FOR POLLY SHANNAHAN – Ms. Peggy Pickall said she has assembled a presentation certificate to honor Polly Shannahan for her years of dedication with TCHPC. She has tried to contact Mrs. Shannahan to find out when it might be convenient for her to appear for the presentation, but has had no luck in reaching her. Mr. Martin Sokolich suggested getting in touch with some of her family. Ms. Pickall said she will try that.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, 2 November 2009 at 9:30 am in the Bradley Room in the South Wing of the Courthouse.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 11:10 am.

6 October 2009